

26/569

November 25, 1958

Dr. Roger Stanier
Bacteriology Department
University of California
Berkeley 4, California

Dear Dr. Stanier:

As you probably know, the National Academy of Sciences has recently established a Space Science Board, of which I am a member, to survey the problems of scientific research in space.

Presumably, within the next few years attempts will be made to land instruments on Mars and Venus. The most interesting aspect of this program, I feel, is the opportunity it offers to determine whether or not some form of life exists in those planets. I believe that we should immediately give serious thought to the problem of detecting the presence of life with instruments which, at the beginning at least, will only be able to transmit a limited amount of information. A small group of biologists, chemists and physicists will meet here informally on December 19 and 20 for a preliminary discussion of this problem. Your presence at this meeting will be extremely valuable and I hope that you will find it possible to be with us. Your expenses, of course, will be paid by the Space Science Board.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely yours,

Bruno Rossi

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